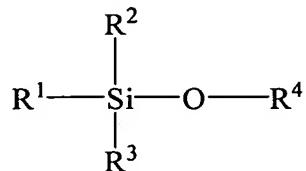


AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): A method for detecting and/or measuring the concentration of fluoride (F⁻) or hydrogen fluoride (HF) in a sample, comprising the following steps:

- ~~bringing into contact~~ contacting, in aqueous solution, said sample with a silylated organic compound in order to obtain a measurement solution, with said silylated organic compound being desilylated when it is in the presence of hydrofluoric acid or of fluoride, with the silylated organic compound and the desilylated organic compound being able to be detected and/or measured separately from each other; and
- detecting and/or measuring, in said measurement solution, the appearance of the desilylated organic compound, or the disappearance of the silylated organic compound, which takes place if fluoride or hydrogen fluoride is present in the sample.

Claim 2 (Currently Amended): The method as claimed in claim 1, in which the ~~formula of the~~ silylated organic compound is:



in which R¹, R² and R³ are independently selected from C₁ to C₆ alkyls and R⁴ is said organic compound.

Claim 3 (Original): The method as claimed in claim 2, in which R¹, R² and R³ are independently selected from the group consisting of methyl, ethyl, propyl and butyl.

Claim 4 (Previously Presented): The method as claimed in claim 1, in which the organic compound is a hydroxylated compound having a molecular weight of from 250 to 200,000 g.mol⁻¹.

Claim 5 (Previously Presented): The method as claimed in claim 1, in which the organic compound is a hydroxylated compound selected from the group consisting of estradiol, peptides, homovanillic acid, amphotericin, steroids, cytokines, arachidonic acid and derivatives thereof.

Claim 6 (Original): The method as claimed in claim 1, in which the detection and/or measurement, in said measurement solution, of the appearance of the desilylated organic compound, or of the disappearance of the silylated organic compound, is carried out by means of gas chromatography.

Claim 7 (Previously Presented): The method as claimed in claim 1, in which the detection and/or the measurement, in said measurement solution, of the appearance of the desilylated organic compound, or of the disappearance of the silylated organic compound, is carried out by means of an immunological test using one or more antibodies which is/are directed either against the unsilylated or desilylated organic compound or against the silylated organic compound.

Claim 8 (Original): The method as claimed in claim 7, in which the antibody(ies) is/are (a) monoclonal antibody(ies).

Claim 9 (Original): The method as claimed in claim 7, in which the immunological test is a competitive-type or non-competitive-type immunoassay.

Claim 10 (Previously Presented): The method as claimed in claim 1, in which the organic compound is estradiol or one of its derivatives.

Claim 11 (Previously Presented): The method as claimed in claim 1, in which the organic compound is selected from the group consisting of estra-1,3,5-triene-3,17 μ or 17 μ -diol, and their derivatives.

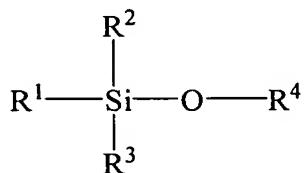
Claim 12 (Previously Presented): The method as claimed in claim 1, in which the silylated organic compound is used at a concentration of from 1 to 2000 ng/ml in the contacting step.

Claim 13 (Currently Amended): The method as claimed in claim 1, in which the pH of the contacting aqueous solution is buffered to pH 4.5 to 5.5.

Claim 14 (Original): The method as claimed in claim 1, in which the contacting is effected at a temperature of from 54 to 64°C.

Claim 15 (Original): A kit for detecting and/or measuring the concentration of fluoride (F⁻) or hydrogen fluoride (HF) in a sample, comprising the following reagents: a silylated organic compound which is desilylated when it is in the presence of fluorine or hydrofluoric acid; and a means for detecting, in aqueous solution, the appearance of the desilylated organic compound or the disappearance of the silylated organic compound.

Claim 16 (Currently Amended): The kit as claimed in claim 15, in which ~~the formula~~ of the silylated organic compound is:



in which R¹, R² and R³ are independently selected from C₁ to C₆ alkyls, and R⁴ is said organic compound.

Claim 17 (Original): The kit as claimed in claim 16, in which R¹, R² and R³ are independently selected from the group consisting of methyl, ethyl, propyl and butyl.

Claim 18 (Previously Presented): The kit as claimed in claim 15, in which the organic compound is a hydroxylated compound having a molecular weight of from 250 to 200,000 g.mol⁻¹.

Claim 19 (Previously Presented): The kit as claimed in claim 15, in which the organic compound is a hydroxylated compound selected from the group consisting of estradiol,

peptides, homovanillic acid, amphotericin, steroids, cytokines or arachidonic acid, and derivatives thereof.

Claim 20 (Previously Presented): The kit as claimed in claim 15, in which the organic compound is estradiol or one of its derivatives.

Claim 21 (Previously Presented): The kit as claimed in claim 15, in which the organic compound is selected from the group consisting of estra-1,3,5-triene-3,17 μ or 17 μ -diol, and their derivatives.

Claim 22 (Previously Presented): The kit as claimed in claim 15, which additionally comprises one or more antibody(ies) which is/are directed against the unsilylated or desilylated organic compound or against the silylated organic compound.

Claim 23 (Original): The kit as claimed in claim 22, which additionally comprises reagents and antibodies which are required for implementing a competitive-type immunoassay or reagents and antibodies which are required for implementing a non-competitive-type immunoassay.

Claim 24 (Previously Presented): The kit as claimed in claim 15, which additionally comprises a polystyrene strip in which is/are formed one or more well(s) which serve(s) as (a) receptacle(s) for the step of contacting and/or detection and/or measurement.

Claim 25 (Currently Amended): The kit as claimed in ~~claim 14~~ claim 24, in which wells are coated with antibodies directed against mouse anti-estradiol antibodies.

Claim 26 (Original): The kit as claimed in claim 24, in which the silylated estradiol is bound to the bottom of the wells.

SUPPORT FOR THE AMENDMENT

Claims 1, 2, 13, 16, and 25 have been amended.

The amendment of Claims 1, 2, 13, 16, and 25 is supported by the corresponding claims as originally filed.

No new matter has been added by the present amendment.